

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
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DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF BIRD FROM  
THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

BY THE MARQUESS HACHISUKA, PH. D.

There is a large cocoanut plantation known as Atong Atong Estate facing a beautiful sandy beach situated in the San Raphael Bay at the northwestern corner of the island of Basilan. This estate is only a short distance from Isabela where Dr. Steere and other well-known ornithologists made collections, and which has become one of the best known type localities for the Philippine birds.

Dr. Shinjiro Yamamura, managing director of the estate, is much interested in natural history and with his son and daughter made extensive collections of birds, fishes, insects, shells, and corals. The finest collection was gathered from May, 1925, to April, 1926, chiefly through the activity of Miss Yaeko Yamamura, who is a qualified field naturalist.

The Yamamura's collection of birds have been presented to and worked out by Dr. Kuroda, and the results were published in *Tori*, 1927. This paper enumerates twenty-three species of birds newly added to the list of Basilan avifauna and one race of oriole then newly described. Miss Yamamura kept a few mounted beautiful birds for herself, but those she turned over to me thinking they might be helpful in the preparation of my book, "The Birds of the Philippine Islands." As these mounted birds bore no adequate labels I put them aside and paid no attention to them until recently. The specimen of sunbird here described as a new species was among them. Because of its extraordinary colour pattern, it has been relaxed and carefully examined by Mr. Otsuka, taxidermist of the Bureau of Agriculture, to determine whether it is composed entirely of one individual bird or whether some other beautiful feathers or skins were put together, because it was mounted for ornamental purposes by a commercial taxi-

dermist. The result was that all the feathers proved to belong to one individual bird. The specimen was further x-rayed at the St. Luke International Hospital and the result was also satisfactory in support of Mr. Otsuka's view. The Marquis Kuroda, who examined the specimen, also came to the same conclusion that the specimen proves to be an undescribed species of *Nectariniidae*.

***Cinnyris*<sup>1</sup> *picta*, sp. nov.**

*Type*.—Male, only specimen, in Hachisuka Collection, Tokyo; Atong Atong plantation, N. W. Basilan, May, 1925–April, 1926; collected by Miss Yaeko Yamamura.

*Specific Characters*.—

Structure: Bill and head about equal (18 mm.) like *Æthopyga* and *Cinnyris*; tail shorter than length of wing, rounded and slightly graduated, 10 tail-feathers (only 8 present and others missing), each feather wide and not narrow like *Æthopyga*. Like *Æthopyga* nasal operculum naked, not covered with short feathers.

Colour pattern: Rump is not yellow like *Æthopyga*, nor has loose yellow feathers like *Eudrepanis*. Having metallic coloured chin, throat, and fore-breast it must be considered as a member of *Cinnyris* in this respect. Upper surface is olive, the characteristic of *Cinnyris*, but in addition the back is brilliantly metallic.

Description of plumage: Upper part of the body yellowish olive like *C. frenatus* except the back where feathers are metallic green and are loose at the tips. A few feathers, apparently in fresh condition, are bottle green but the majority have metallic bronze wash when the light is behind the observer. Superciliary stripe and a line from lores to malar region lemon-yellow, darker in the former and paler in the latter; chin, throat and upper breast metallic violet and with a purple sheen like *C. frenatus*; lower breast and flanks poppy-red, and long feathers cover over abdomen. The abdominal feathers and under tail-coverts are light straw yellow; wing earthy brown; tail black with large portion of tip white, merely indicated on the two central pairs.

Bill black; legs, in dry skin, dark flesh colour.

First primary short, 3d, 4th and 5th about equal and longest. (In *Æthopyga* 1st short, 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th about equal.)

*Measurements*.—Wing, 56; tail, 56; bill, 17; tarsus, 16.

*Range*.—So far only known from type locality.

*Remarks*.—Only Cinnyrine species somewhat resembling this are the yellow-vented, olive-backed, *jugularis*, *sericea*, and *frenatus* group but the new species is distinctly different by having red under-parts instead of yellow, and the back metallic green instead of yellowish olive. Although yellow and red under-parts are obviously different I have good reason to believe that they are not systematically distant. The much smaller Philippine species, *C. s. sperata*, found on 24 islands, has poppy-red under-parts while *C. s. juliae*, of much restricted range (only five islands) has

<sup>1</sup> If one refuses to use *Cinnyris* for the Asiatic birds *Leptocoma* will have to be applied.

yellow under-parts. These two sunbirds are found on geographically different islands except Mindanao. My expedition collected a series of about forty skins from south Mindanao and found the majority to be of the red type while a few are intermediate with *juliae* type mixed with abundant red feathers on yellow breast. After discovering this fact I consider *juliae* and *sperata* conspecific and recognize that an intermediate series occur at certain portions of Mindanao. Members of *Cinnyris* found in Basilan are one large *C. j. jugularis* and one small *C. sperata juliae*, both yellow breasted. Therefore, the discovery of this large red breasted third species is truly astonishing. These three species have been collected at Atong Atong plantation where cocoanuts are extensively grown. The unique type has not been anatomically sexed but in view of the strong sex dimorphism existing among members of the present family the specimen is considered as male.